

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

Status of the Claims

After entry of the above amendments, Claims 11 and 16 are canceled without prejudice to renewal. Claim 7 is amended to correct a typographical error.

Claim Objection under 37 C.F.R. § 1.75(c)

This rejection is obviated by cancellation of Claims 11 and 16.

Claim Rejection 35 U.S.C. § 102(b)

The Examiner has rejected Claims 4 and 6 as allegedly anticipated by Hirano, *et al.* A claim is anticipated only if each and every element as set forth in the claim is found, either expressly or inherently, in a single prior art reference. M.P.E.P. § 2131.

Claim 4 recites a sustained release pharmaceutical composition comprising an *ionic* prostaglandin I₂ derivative *and* an ionic compound having an opposite charge to that of the ionic prostaglandin I₂ derivative (emphasis added). Claim 6 depends from Claim 4.

This rejection is respectfully traversed, because, as the Examiner states on page 3 of paper 13, the prior art does not teach or suggest an anionic or cationic form (i.e., ionic) of the prostaglandin I₂ derivative of the formula I compound. Hirano, *et al.* disclose the excretion and metabolism of beraprost sodium in dog, but do not disclose or suggest a sustained release pharmaceutical composition comprising the elements of an *ionic* prostaglandin I₂ derivative *and* an ionic compound having an opposite charge to that of the ionic prostaglandin I₂ derivative. In fact, Hirano, *et al.* do not disclose or suggest any sustained release pharmaceutical composition. Because Hirano, *et al.* do not disclose or suggest each and every element of the sustained release pharmaceutical composition of Claim 4, Hirano, *et al.* does not properly anticipate Claim 4 or dependent Claim 6.

Advantageously, the pharmaceutical compositions of the present invention, especially those having large partition coefficients have sustained release effects, are far superior to the prostanoid acid derivatives alone. An excellent sustained release composition is obtained by increasing the hydrophobicity of the prostanoid acid derivative. The ionic compound is

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capable of enhancing the hydrophobic property of the ionic prostanoic acid derivative.

Unexpectedly, these ionic complexes exhibit an excellent sustained release effect.

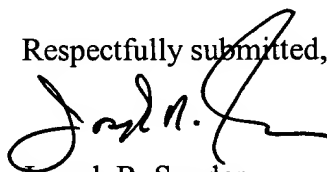
Accordingly, the Examiner is respectfully requested to withdraw this rejection.

CONCLUSION

In view of the foregoing, Applicants believe all claims now pending in this Application are in condition for allowance. The issuance of a formal Notice of Allowance at an early date is respectfully requested.

If the Examiner believes a telephone conference would expedite prosecution of this application, please telephone the undersigned at 925-472-5000.

Respectfully submitted,



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